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Mr Daniel Bishop
Headteacher
Allenby Primary School
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Dear Mr Bishop

Short inspection of Allenby Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since your arrival in September 2016, you have made significant changes to the culture of the school that have resulted in increased stability, a contented workforce and happy pupils. You, your staff, pupils and their parents and carers are rightly proud of the school's accolade as a Unicef level 2 Rights Respecting School, which permeates the ethos of the community. Pupils were keen to explain what this means and the work they have been doing to raise funds to help build a school in India. Pupils and staff consistently treat each other with kindness and respect. Older pupils explained enthusiastically how they applied to become part of 'team CRC' (Convention on the Rights of the Child) which helps younger pupils. Other pupils have been elected as 'rights respecting officers' in order to represent pupils' views and this group has recently updated the school's anti-bullying policy. As one parent commented: 'The school is very good at celebrating diversity, values equality and has had an increased focus on inclusive practices this year.'

You and your deputies have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what still needs to be developed. You have created a clear plan to achieve the high standard of education you want to provide. Many of your actions have already proved highly beneficial for staff, pupils and their parents. All were unanimous in complimenting you on the positive changes that have happened since your appointment. As one parent said: 'All members of staff are now more happy and friendly since the new head started.'

You are proud of the fact that you are an inclusive community school. You welcome parents into the school and work closely with them to educate their children. Consequently, you have built trusting relationships with families and the local community. This means that you can support them to access external support quickly, should they need it. Earlier this year, you held a safeguarding conference to highlight potential issues, which was well attended by parents. As a result, you have instigated a safeguarding working group for parents and staff to ensure that information is up to date and relevant to the needs of the community.

Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make very good progress in your specialist unit. Your team carefully assess each pupil's complex needs and work closely with their parents to ensure that they make good progress from their starting points. Some begin their school life in your specialist unit and then successfully transfer into full-time mainstream. Others learn in the unit, but enjoy participating in whole-school events, as they are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education. For instance, during the inspection, pupils thoroughly enjoyed a whole-school drumming session where they learned how to play several different rhythms at the same time.

Governors are experienced and share your commitment to ensure that the school provides the very best quality of education for every child. They are clear about areas requiring further development and appropriately hold you to account for planned actions.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff have prioritised keeping pupils safe. You have created a nurturing and inclusive environment where all pupils feel cared for and protected. You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of a high quality. Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are consistent with statutory regulations. Staff and governors receive relevant and up-to-date training. They are clear about the risks posed in the immediate community and more widely across the city. Staff are vigilant in identifying any causes for concern, for instance signs of neglect, domestic abuse or female genital mutilation. This includes understanding the 'Prevent' duty, which helps staff identify potential signs of radicalisation and extremism.

Pupils receive a wealth of information on how they can keep themselves safe in school and in the wider community. They are clear that there is an adult they can talk to, should they be concerned about anything. Pupils know how to keep safe when using the internet and are clear about what constitutes bullying. They say that on the rare occasion when pupils are unkind to each other, teachers quickly and efficiently deal with it. During the inspection, pupils visited the 'life bus' on site to learn about keeping themselves safe in modern society.

Inspection findings

- You have rightly prioritised improving and strengthening pupils' literacy skills across the school. Following the 2017 key stage 2 outcomes, you and your senior team identified that pupils' reading skills were not as strong as their writing and numeracy. In particular, you noted that their inference and comprehension skills could be stronger. As a result, you have now instigated a whole-school approach to teaching explicit reading skills. For example, every day pupils practise key comprehension skills and reading for pleasure is actively encouraged and tracked. You have ensured that all staff understand that this is a priority and that they are collectively responsible for improving pupils' reading skills.
- Phonics is taught systematically and, as a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the phonics check has risen significantly over the past couple of years. The focus on improving pupils' early reading skills in preparation for key stages 1 and 2 is having a positive impact on the progress pupils make across the curriculum.
- However, you acknowledge that some teaching of reading is not of a consistently high standard and that further staff training would be beneficial.
- Since your arrival, you have prioritised improvement in the early years provision. You have appointed a new team and with the support of an external consultant, you have established a bright and creative learning environment. Plans are in place to improve still further the substantial outside area, so that children can enjoy the full range of activities, toys and equipment on offer. You accurately assess children's abilities on entry and work closely with their parents, so that there is a shared responsibility for their learning. The 'wow' books give parents the opportunity to see significant steps in their children's learning while in school.
- As a result of a whole-school focus to improve numeracy, outcomes in mathematics are now strong. You have established a consistent approach to the teaching of writing. Pupils are given many opportunities to write at length, in different genres and for different audiences and purposes. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress in their writing over time. Your focus on improving reading skills looks set to result in similarly positive results.
- You and your senior leaders carefully track the progress of all pupils. You are clear about which groups of pupils need further focus and interventions. You and your staff are committed to improving pupils' self-esteem through your focus on respecting pupils' rights and ensuring equality of opportunity. This includes building pupils' cultural capital and giving pupils bespoke support when needed. However, you have identified that some pupils need further support as they move from key stage 1 into key stage 2. This group is your current focus.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of reading across the school is of a consistently high quality so that all pupils make at least good progress

- they continue to focus on improving the progress of identified pupils and groups of pupils, as they transfer from key stage 1 into key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Ealing. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with the headteacher and two deputy headteachers to discuss the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. I held meetings with governors and with a representative from the local authority. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including referrals to external agencies, and the register of safeguarding checks made on staff prior to their appointment. I visited classrooms with senior leaders to gather evidence on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. I spoke to staff and pupils during informal times and in classrooms. I listened to pupils reading and visited the early years provision. I took account of the 53 written responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire, and the 35 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey. I spoke to parents at the end of the day as they collected their children and a parent who requested a meeting.